

41
T H E
P O E T ' s D R E A M .

*'Tis very dang'rous tampr'ing with the Muse,
The Profit's small, and you have much to lose.*

ROSCOMMON.



D U B L I N ,
Printed by S. POWELL,
For JOSEPH COTTER, under Dick's Coffee-house.
M D C C X L V I I .

May 7, 1912.

Charles Jackson
of Boston

MAILED Charles Jackson
of Boston

My dear friend,
I have just received your letter of the 11th inst. and am
glad to hear that you are well and happy. I am
also well and hope to hear from you soon.

ROSCOMMON

D U B I M

1. The first of these is the fact that the
2. Government has not yet decided whether it
3. will accept the offer of the United States
4. to purchase the Hawaiian Islands. The
5. second is the fact that the United States
6. has not yet decided whether it will
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THE
POET'S DREAM.

DUBLIN, that breeds the Poet, breeds the Dun,

(As sings her oldest and most tuneful * Son);

He meant the Growth of Poets to withstand,

That else, † as once, had over-ran the Land.

So *Egypt*, Crocodiles would soon lay waste,

Were not their Eggs th' *Ichneumon*'s useful Feast;

Whose

* Mr. LAURENCE WHITE, Author of *An Essay on Dunning*.

† The Rage of Poets were once so numerous in this Kingdom, that they made a Law to restrain their Numbers.

Whose good Effects the Muse prepares to tell,
 The dire Disasters that a Bard beset;
 Of wond'rous Change, surprising wrought, and new;
 He left his Muse. — Tho' strange, yet think it true.

DAMN'D by the Town, an unsuccessful Bard,
 By griping Penury, in Durance hard
 Was long detain'd; him VULCAN'S Art
 Restrain'd a Debtor, in a dismal Part

Of that sad House by *Liffy's* Side,
 Where wretched Mortals watch th' alternate Tide.

HERE 'twas poor SHEER, held by his hapless Fate,
 Invited Charity, thro' Iron Grate:

And sadly murmur'd at the tasteless Throng,

Whose fickle Judgment's ever in the wrong:

Yet he this Joy does 'midst his Sorrows find,

That he can see, tho' all the World be blind:

Conscious

Conscious of in-bred Worth, he hates the Town,
 That rob'd his Writings of deserv'd Renown,
 And sadly left him thus to mourn his Days,
 Devoid of Money, Liberty, and Praise.

'Twas now the Time when PHOEBUS' gilded Car
 Scarce shot a Ray to light the World from far,
 When wearied Cits from various Work retire,
 And quaff their Ale around some genial Fire;
 Then SHEER, with Breast-full of the Muse, and Spite,
 Enters his Room, with full Intent to write.
 But oh! (alas! what Things are free from Fate!)
 An hungry Mouse had all his Candle eat;
 How rag'd our Poet at this dreadful Loss!
 When all Thing's join'd his hapless Muse to cross:
 Now curs'd the Mouse, and now he damns the Night,
 And vents in Words the Spleen he meant to write:

B.

Till

Till spent with cursing his relentless Fate,
 Fatigu'd in thoughtful Thoughtlessness he sat.
 Not great MAC FLECKNOE, whom sage Dulness crown'd,
 And gave the Sway, of all the Nations round,
 More thoughtful sat, amid his native Gloom,
 Than SHEER now pensive in his darksome Room.
 Thro' the still Night he now deplores his Fate,
 Now prays great PHOEBUS to amend his State.
 As when, at Neighbour's Wake, old Matrons sit,
 And tell long Stories of the dreadful Pit,
 Whence direful Dæmons and pale Spectres come,
 To warn poor Mortals of approaching Doom;
 They sigh, — and all confess the pow'ful Charm,
 Then pray the Gods to keep their Doors from Harm;
 Till stealing SOMNUS in soft Slumbers stills
 Their Love of Prate, and Dread of future Ills.

THUS

THUS SHEER in Anguish past the Midnight Hours,
 With Pray'rs alternate to the heavenly Pow'rs,
 Till harass'd Nature now no more can pray,
 But sinks in Slumbers e'er th' Approach of Day:
 The Time now past when hovering Dreams are true,
 And rising *Sol* the Day's bright Curtains drew,
 SHEER's waking Fancy now had reach'd those Plains,
 Where PHOEBUS listens to the MUSES's Strains.
 In Thought he stood upon the sacred Ground,
 With streaming Light and vernal Honour crown'd.
 Proud of their Lord, where the fork'd Hills arise
 With lofty Top, and pierce the azure Skies:
 When lo! with instant Sound the loud-tongue'd Fame,
 To all PARNASSUS, his Approach proclaim:
 APOLLO heard, and quick a MUSE he sends,
 To welcome SHEER among his ancient Friends,

The

The Bard enraptur'd hears the joyful Sound,
 Salutes the MUSE, and gazes all around ;
 Asks, as the Groves he views, " Who 'twas dwelt there ?"
 She answers, — " MARO ; and great PINDAR here."
 " 'Tis well (quoth SHEER), but pray, point out my Seat ;
 " I hope 'tis no where, but among the Great ! "

Thus they convers'd, 'till in his golden Dream
 He now approach'd the *Heliconian* Stream ;
 Here stopt, undress'd, and plung'd into the Pool,
 And cleanly wash'd all Dullness from his Soul.
 Then dress'd, ascends the laurell'd Hill above,
 Where heavenly Airs attune the vocal Grove ;
 Where PHOEBUS' Beams with brighter Lustre shine,
 Cheer'd with the Music of the Sister Nine ;
 Their heav'nly Airs his ravish'd Soul inspire,
 Such as when ORPHEUS touch'd the tuneful Lyre,

And

And with his gentle and persuasive Song
 He charm'd the Brutes, the Woods, and Rocks along.
 Such Transports felt the *Macedonian* King,
 When old TIMOTHEUS touch'd the warbling String,
 As SHEER now felt, whose swift and eager Haste
 Had reach'd the Palace, where bright PHOEBUS, plac'd
 High on a golden Throne, in awful State,
 Welcomes the joyful Poet to his Gate.

“ Hail, wond'rous Bard ! (says he) whose matchless Song,

“ By a base World, has been contemn'd too long ;

“ The noblest Verse 'mong them obscur'd may lie ;

“ But ours it is, to bid it never die !

“ Then here, receive this Crown for all thy Toil,

“ Which, nor base Critics, nor dread Time can spoil.”

So said ; SHEER, grateful, bending down as low,

As to his Grace the Dedicators bow,

Inly triumphing quick his Hand stretch'd forth,
 To seize the Crown of his imagin'd Worth,
 But caught a Rope, which opportunely hung,
 That o'er his Bed a ragged Curtain strung.

THE Mouse, who erst upon the Candle fed,
 In search of Prey, had reach'd the Poet's Bed,
 And, lightly skipping, cross'd his rueful Face;
 Frighted, he wakes, and views the loathsome Place:
 With his Repose, his air-form'd Pleasures fade;
 Real his Woe, his Comfort but a Shade.

“ Is this the Crown? This, PHOEBUS, the Reward,

“ For all the Suff'rings of a martyr'd Bard?

“ This! — This! — (cries he) but why should I refuse

“ The proffer'd Service of the willing Noose;

“ Come then — come Rope, and end all future Strife,

“ Rid me at once of Misery and Life!”

With

With dire Resolve, he searches for some Beam,
 To be the last Supporter of his Fame:
 When found, he cries (the Rope being firmly ty'd,)
 PHOEBUS, behold, thy latest Gift I've try'd!
 Then, with a hasty, but a gentle Swing,
 He falls, suspended by the hempen String.

TH' Events of Life, how idly Mortals rate!
 How apt to rage at seeming Frowns of Fate!
 Oft, SHEER, thou'lt wish'd the Mouse's Life o'erthrown;
 The Mouse was destin'd to preserve thy own.
 For now while she the empty Room explor'd,
 And searching, mounted on the fatal Board,
 Whence SHEER was hung, — now almost void of Hope,
 With glad Surprise she sees the fatal Rope;
 With Hunger fierce assails the Prize she found,
 And the gnaw'd Rope drops SHEER upon the Ground.

Wak'd

Wak'd from his Trance, revolves on what was past;
 Smiles on the Mouse, still fix'd to her Repast;
 Then Silence breaks, and, with repentant Voice,
 Disclaims the Error of his former Choice.

- “ No more (he cries) my tortur'd Breast shall feel
 “ The painful Pangs of Envy's racking Wheel;
 “ Unequal to the Task, how could I hope
 “ To gain a Crown? alas! I got a Rope!
 “ A Rope! the cure of all my former Pain;
 “ Nor PHOEBUS gave me the Reward in vain.
 “ To my own Loss no more I'll court the Muse,
 “ And, undistinguish'd, Friends and Foes abuse.
 “ By milder Deeds my Virtue I'll approve,
 “ And loving Mankind, I'll deserve their Love.”

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